



**President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen**

**High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy /  
Vice-President of the Commission, Josep Borrell**

**Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Stella Kyriakides**

**Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Olivér Várhelyi**

Brussels, 22 January 2021

Dear President Ursula von der Leyen,  
Dear HR/VP Josep Borrell,  
Dear Commissioner Stella Kyriakides,  
Dear Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi,

We, Members of the European Parliament, recognize and express our appreciation for the Commission's leadership in organizing a joint procurement of the vaccines against COVID-19. It is an exemplary case of cooperation, which will go into history as a sign of unity and become a model for addressing common needs of the EU Member States in the future.

We also welcome your recent announcement about the vaccine sharing mechanism, which will enable to share the EU acquired vaccines with partner countries. This announcement partially addresses the concerns we have regarding vaccination against COVID-19 in the Eastern Partnership region.

We are deeply concerned that as of today, majority of our Eastern partners rely solely on the COVAX mechanism, which will not be enough for their populations to acquire a herd immunity. Moreover, the COVAX mechanism will enable the vaccination only in spring, which is a significant time-gap if to compare with the EU Member States. Some of our Eastern partners were hesitant to wait and are considering or starting to use Russian and Chinese vaccines against COVID-19. We lack information about effectiveness of these vaccines and whether they meet the required criteria for marketing authorisation. The provision of these vaccines with no doubt will be used by Russia and China to boost their influence in the Eastern Partnership region and, as in previous cases, will undermine the much higher support of the EU.

Our position is in line with the one expressed by Ministers of Foreign Affairs of 13 EU Member States in their letter to you as of 6 January 2021. We encourage you not to differentiate our immediate neighbours in the East and the South and to ensure similar support for acquiring vaccines against COVID-19 for the EU Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkan countries.

We call upon you to prepare a detailed plan indicating when and how many vaccines our partners should expect. Some of the Western Balkan countries have already received donations

of vaccines from undisclosed EU Member States. We encourage the same approach with the EU Eastern Partnership countries. The utmost importance is to vaccinate the frontline workers and high-risk groups. We should enable our neighbours to start vaccination of these groups as soon as possible. Moreover, we should do everything possible to achieve that the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans countries develop a herd immunity at as similar time as possible to that of EU Member States.

Sincerely,

Petras Auštrevičius, Renew Europe, Lithuania  
Radosław Sikorski, EPP, Poland  
Dacian Cioloș, Renew Europe, Romania  
Jarosław Duda, EPP, Poland  
Dragoș Tudorache, Renew Europe, Romania  
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